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again to limit the meaning of spirit and to denote by the word, "mind (or self) in its higher reaches." In either of these uses, however, the spiritual is roughly speaking the personal and, as such, sharply distinguished from the material.<sup>37</sup> Dr. Loewenberg's essential conclusions are, of course, unaffected by this criticism of his use of terms. But, stripped of its paradoxical and unhistorical identification of "spiritual" and "material," this portion of his paper, it would seem, reduces to a dispute "where there is no difference of opinion."

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### BOOK REVIEWS

*The Nature of Existence.* Volume I. J. M. E. McTAGGART. Cambridge University Press. 1921. Pp. xxi + 309.

There are some systematic works, even works of philosophy, that may be read as a sort of austere recreation. They may be read for the sheer pleasure of watching the thought sprout and grow in this direction and in the other. We are saying a great deal about Dr. McTaggart's new work when we say that it can *not* be included in this class. If there is any one who has the gift of making crooked paths straight and reducing an obscure or complex argument to absolute lucidity, it is the author of this work. Nevertheless, there are passages, whole chapters indeed, in *The Nature of Existence*, where the reading is about as fluent as the middle chapter of a *Symbolic Logic*. All has been done, one feels, that language can do; yet the thought itself is so involved that, as Professor Broad has said, "it is a remarkable achievement for a writer to have kept his head among all these complexities without the help of an elaborate symbolism."

That this difficulty may not be found in the forthcoming second volume of the work is suggested by the author's statement of his plan. In the first volume he considers "what can be determined as to the characteristics which belong to all that exists, or, again, which belong to existence as a whole." In the second volume he proposes to consider "what consequences of theoretical and practical interest can be drawn from this general nature of the existent with respect to various parts of the existent which are empirically known to us." Throughout this first book the reasoning is rigorously *a priori*. There are only two occasions on which Dr. McTaggart makes any appeal to perception: once to prove that something exists, and again to prove

<sup>37</sup> Since Hume wrote, the term "spiritual" has served also to differentiate the personalistic from the ideistic form of idealism.

that this something is not simple; and even of these cases, it is only in the former that he feels such appeal to be necessary. This resolute adherence to the *a priori* is not in metaphysics a matter of choice, he contends; it is a matter of necessity. When the question is what characteristics belong to everything that exists, or to existence as a whole, the use of induction is absurd. Induction proceeds by noting the resemblances among the members of a class: but existence as a whole is not a member of a class of such existences. Again, the number of existent things is infinite, and hence no possible inductive diligence could bring within its purview more than "an infinitely small proportion of the whole." This abjuring of sense experience and adherence to "the high *priori* road" naturally suggests Hegel; and while Dr. McTaggart is careful to distinguish his own method from the Hegelian, he admits that it stands "much closer to Hegel's method than to that of any other philosopher." He is so entirely unimpressed with the arguments that have been brought against the fertility of the deductive method in metaphysics that he offers only a very brief defense, and refers the reader to the answer that has been given by "Mr. Bradley in a passage which I regard as by far the most important and illuminating comment ever made upon Hegel."<sup>1</sup>

Some of McTaggart's chief positions may be set in relief by a comparison with those of the contemporary to whom he here so approvingly refers. Bradley, as well as McTaggart, is a metaphysician who still believes that final truth may be gained by the speculative route about the nature of reality and the nature of truth itself. Both believe that "nothing exists but spirit." Both emphasize the distinction between "what" and "that," the "nature" of a thing and its existence. Both maintain that neither of these sides can be without the other; and they would hence agree that such entities as propositions, possibilities and "floating ideas," if regarded—as many realists would regard them—as real but non-existent, are quite gratuitous. Both would regard every judgment as ultimately a judgment of existence, and all reality as ultimately existent. It is no doubt because he holds this view that Dr. McTaggart has given his work the title that it bears, since in studying what exists he considers that he is examining the character of all that is real. Both thinkers, again, agree in the doctrine of degrees of truth and would hold that since the nature of a thing is not independent of its relations to other things, our conception of it must change as its relations are more completely apprehended. And though Bradley's sweeping disbelief in the reality of all relations would set him at last apart from Mc-

<sup>1</sup> *Logic*, Book III, Pt. I, Ch. II, E.

Taggart, both would hold that our knowledge approaches perfection in the degree to which we lay hold of an order of necessity which involves everything in its web.

But with this general agreement, there are striking points of difference which appear at the outset of McTaggart's work. It is evident, for example, that neither reality nor truth means to him what it does to Bradley. For while McTaggart would admit degrees of truth, he would deny that there can be any degrees of the real. "'A is X' may misrepresent the nature of A less than 'A is Y,' but, unless it is quite true that A is X, then A is not X, and AX is not real at all" (p. 5). Again, what constitutes the truth of a belief is not its coherence with a system of beliefs, but its *correspondence* with the specific fact about which it is entertained. Correspondence does not mean copying; but while we can say what it is not, and can point to examples of it, we are unable to say what it is; it is a relation which is unique and therefore undefinable. It is this difference of view regarding the relation of judgment to reality which explains, I think, the other difference just noted. In Bradley's view the reality judged about is actually present in judgment; "the real Cæsar beyond doubt must himself enter into my judgments and be a constituent of my knowledge."<sup>2</sup> There is no external and real object to which my judgment, if true, must correspond. My judgment is reality affirming itself in part through my mind. Truth and reality become identical, and hence the degrees of each are the same. But for one who holds that the content of judgment is distinct from the fact referred to, and that the truth of the one is quite distinct from the reality of the other, it is clear that a judgment may become more true without the fact's becoming more real. Indeed, since truth belongs to beliefs, and beliefs are psychical events which are continually coming and going, truth too must come and go. Thus a fact may be real but can not be true; while a judgment or belief may be true, but except in its character as psychical event, apparently not real. If I dream of Mrs. Gamp, my dream itself is real, but Mrs. Gamp is not; and if Mrs. Gamp were real, that reality would belong to her and not to any judgment about her. And reality, like existence, is either there or not there. Indeed, although McTaggart distinguishes the existent as *prima facie* only a species of the real, it seems to me that throughout he means by "real" "existing" and nothing more.

Perhaps the most interesting feature of Dr. McTaggart's discussion of truth is its incidental criticism of the doctrine of propositions. These, he maintains, are needless intermediaries between

<sup>2</sup> *Essays on Truth and Reality*, p. 409.

thought and fact, and on principles of economy may be eliminated. All cases both of true and false beliefs he thinks sufficiently covered by the formulæ that truth is correspondence with the fact referred to, and that falsity is a relation of non-correspondence to *all* facts.

The argument of this volume, after the introductory book, is at once so compact and so complex that nothing beyond an indication of the trend of the argument is here feasible. Having proved that "something exists" by showing in Cartesian style that to doubt it involves the existence of the doubt, and having shown that existence without qualitative content is meaningless, the author maintains that all qualities belong to substances, substance being defined as "something existent which has qualities without being itself a quality." A substance is infinitely divisible, and since each part is also a substance, the number of substances is infinite; while, further, the nature of each is distinct. The author's main problem is now to determine the types of relation which bind substances and their qualities together. Of these perhaps the most important are what McTaggart terms intrinsic and extrinsic determination; the first of which is the implication between characteristics in virtue of which inference is possible, and the second of which is a relation of interdependence which unites every quality and every substance in such a way that, given the alteration of the slightest detail anywhere, we could not with confidence expect anything to be the same. With this relation established, McTaggart proceeds at once to the contention that the universe is an "organic unity," a conception which (probably with memories of the bitter history of the term) he takes a separate chapter to define. The last division of the book is devoted largely to the working out of a very elaborate relation called "determining correspondence" between the various substances in the universe, a relation which is devised to meet, and which McTaggart believes does meet, the contradiction apparently presented by the infinite divisibility of substance.

It seems likely that this work will first gain its proper estimation at the hands of that increasing group of thinkers who are at home on the borders of mathematics and philosophy rather than from those who have confined themselves to the more traditional modes of thought. Whatever their verdict, it is clear that Dr. McTaggart has given us one of the most lucidly written, thoroughgoing and competent books on metaphysics that have appeared in many a year.

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